

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

October 27, 2015

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on October 27, 2015, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Dale Venturini, Bernie Buonanno, Paul MacDonald, Jeff Hirsh and Stan Israel.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill and Kim Keough, RICCA; John McGinn, Amanda Wilmouth, Arlene Oliva, Melissa Avedisian, Diane Richards and Breana Quinn, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Kristen Adamo and Tom Reil, PWCVB; Daniel Schwartz and Michael Gravison, VETS; Cheryl Cohen, John Ciolfi and Larry Lepore, RICC/DDC and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM

Ms. Venturini asked for approval of the June meeting. She noted that we have not had a quorum to take any votes because of the Summer. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to approved the minutes of the June meeting.

PWCVB

Mr. Reil began the PWCVB Power Point Presentation. Mr. Reil stated that for the month of September hotel rates were up 8.6% over the same time last year and occupancy was up 4.7% of last September. Mr. Reil commented that the number of room nights blocked is deceptive because room nigh blocks are not always used. He said that some visitors have rewards plans with different hotel flags and other guests use Bed & Breakfast establishments or Air B&B's. Mr. Reil stated that definite bookings for the Convention Center include Sigma Chi Grand Chapter 2017, Gordon Food Service, American Youth Football & Cheerleading and INFORMA Exhibition. Mr. Reil stated that the economic impact (direct spending) of the definite RICCA bookings is \$8,101,626 on the local economy. Mr. Reil reported that tentative booking highlights include ICONICS, Inc. the American Volleyball Coaches Association, which would be a great event to host in the Complex, American Society of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists and the NA Association of Cancer Research Registries. Mr. Reil reported that the sales team had traveled to Washington, DC and exhibited at HSMAI's Annual Meeting and National Tradeshow. He stated that this event was disappointing and the PWCVB would not be sending representatives next year. Mr. Reil said the team also participated in the Omni Global Sales and the Omni Providence joint event at a Washington Redskins Game. An

informational dinner with prospective customers was conducted in New York City and the CVB hosted their annual Waterfire reception that was attended by several local ambassadors and stakeholders.

Ms. Adamo reported that the CVB is working with the Dunkin' Donuts Center and the Authority on communicating the plan for ComicCon. Ms. Adamo noted that the CVB had played a significant role in the design of the Annual Report and is collaborating with the Dunk and the Authority on the RI Flower Show marketing.

DUNKIN' DOUNTS CENTER

Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center events. Ms. Cohen presented highlights of upcoming events at the Dunk. Ms. Cohen said that ComicCon will be advertised in local print as well as e-blasts and social media. Ms. Cohen reported that there will be a press conference and ribbon cutting by the Mayor using light sabers to open the event. Ms. Cohen said that Trans-Siberian Orchestra will be performing on December 16th. She said that a viral video is being created with Providence Bruins highlights and TSO music. Advertising for this is also E-Blasts and social media. Ms. Cohen reported that media buys are being finalized for Disney on Ice. Ms. Cohen reported that other notable events are the WWE 2015 Holiday Tour, Jeff Dunham and Monster Jam. She also stated that her marketing team is working on the Rhode Island Flower Show,

Harlem Globetrotters and NCAA Basketball. Ms. Cohen presented a report on internet usage and where interest is coming from. Mr. MacDonald asked about tickets that are fraudulent that are purchased or offered on line. Ms. Cohen stated that a problem occurs when the tickets are not purchased from authorized sellers. Ms. Cohen said that some unscrupulous web-sites advertise tickets to events that have not been booked, the Marvel event for an example, or others that will attempt to inform the public that a show is sold out but you can get tickets through them. Mr. Lepore stated that Congress is working on Federal Legislation that will curb this abuse.

CONVENTION CENTER

Mr. McGinn was asked to present the report for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn stated that the revenue goal for the year is \$9,600,000.00 and that currently we are at \$10,031,719.89. Mr. McGinn stated that this was the best July that we have had in eight years. Mr. McGinn reported that contracted events include Rhode Island Invitational, Imagine Dance Competition, RISD Graduation, BCBSRI All Employee Meeting and Blended Learning Technology Conference.

Mr. McGinn stated that many site tours took place such as Pangborn Sensory Science Symposium, American Physical Society, Rhode Island Manufactures Association, the War is Real Prayer Fest and several others. Mr. McGinn said that the sales team traveled to IMEX America in Las Vegas and exhibited with the CVB. Mr. McGinn presented a report indicating attendance statistics. Mr. MacDonald

asked if there were any big events that are in the planning stage. Mr. Lepore said that he is trying to get Spirit of America to return. He said that Senator Reed has been encouraging.

VETS

Mr. Gravison's Power Point Presentation began with a slide on attendance and income for the VETS and continued with insights and analytics. Mr. Gravison produced graphs in response to questions asked on guest surveys and indicating the changes that have occurred since the Spring of 2014. Mr. Gravison also had a pie chart showing where our patrons are traveling from and indicating that we draw mostly from Providence County and Massachusetts. Mr. Lepore stated that people from Massachusetts would rather travel to Providence than the Worcester or Boston. Mr. Gravison was pleased to report that overall guest satisfaction remains at 90% with the most negative comments being venue signage, parking prices and fees and guests would like to have healthier food choices. Mr. Gravison included some guest responses in his presentation. The VETS upcoming schedule was included as well as a list of special events. Photos of the art gallery and the new President's Club show the progress that has been made at the theater.

RICCA

Ms. Keough stated that a continuation of our Economic Impact Study for Fiscal Years 14, 15 and 16 will be completed. Ms. Keough noted that we are still in Fiscal 16 therefore a report will not be completed until next Fall. Ms. Keough reminded everyone that Feed 1000 would take place on December 19th and that in the past the most needed items were coats. Ms. Keough said that bins will be placed in the lobby of the Convention Center for your gently used coats. She stated that adults as well as children's coats are needed. Ms. Keough stated that a press release went out last week regarding Feed 1000.

Ms. Venturini thanked everyone for all of their hard work and asked if there was any further business. Hearing none she looked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald and seconded by Mr. Buonanno it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:45 PM